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REMARKS

Reconsideration is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1 has been revised to include the feature of claim 2, with additional revisions. Claim 2 has been canceled accordingly. Support for the revisions can be found at, e.g., right and left arrows in Fig. 15 and page 21, lines 13-18 of the specification, among other places. Claims 23 and 27 have been revised to include features similar to those added in claim 1. Claims 1 and 3-31 remain pending in the application. Claims 23-31 have been withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Koike et al. (WO 03/005907). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 requires a lancet body that is fixed to a casing when an external force exceeding a predetermined level in a particular direction is not applied to the casing, whereas the lancet body becomes movable relative to the casing when an external force exceeding the predetermined level in the particular direction is applied to the casing, wherein the particular direction crosses a direction in which a space extends throughout the casing for retaining the lancet body, and the particular direction is directed from an outside of the casing toward an inside of the casing.

Koike et al. fail to teach or suggest a lancet body becoming movable relative to a casing when an external force exceeding a predetermined level is applied to the casing, where the external force is in a particular direction from an outside of the casing toward an inside of the casing, as required by claim 1. Instead, Koike et al. merely discuss a lancet that includes a lancing unit 2A held in a case 1A. Koike et al. also discuss a wait position holding means 7A including a plurality of movable pieces 70A and a plurality of projections 70B provided on the case 1A. The lancing unit 2A can be held at the wait position, when the lancing unit 2A is fixed to the case 1A due to the resilient force of the movable pieces 70A and the pressing force from the projections 70B. In pulling out the lancet from the lancing apparatus after the lancing operation, the lancing unit 2A can be held at a retreated position, when a projection 70b of each movable piece 70A engages an annular recess 71A (see Koike et al., US 2004/0243165, paragraphs [0105]-[0107] and

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Figs. 19 and 20A-B). In fact, the movable pieces 70A are pushed out of the way to allow a stopper 71A and the lancing unit 2A to move relative to the casing 1A (see Koike et al., US 2004/0243165, Figs. 19 and 20A-B). Koike et al. provides no teachings of a lancet body becoming movable relative to a casing when an external force exceeding a predetermined level is applied to the casing, where the external force is in a particular direction from an outside of the casing toward an inside of the casing, as required by claim 1.

For at least these reasons, claim 1 is patentable over Koike et al. Claims 3-18 depend ultimately from claim 1 and are patentable along with claim 1 and need not be separately distinguished at this time. Applicants are not conceding the relevance of the rejection to the remaining features of the rejected claims.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Koike et al. in view of Nishikawa et al. (US 6,315,738). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claims 19 and 20 depend ultimately from claim 1 and are patentable over Koike et al. for at least the same reasons discussed above regarding claims 1 and 3-18. Nishikawa et al. do not remedy the deficiencies of Koike et al. In fact, Nishikawa et al. are completely silent as to a lancet body becoming movable relative to a casing when an external force exceeding a predetermined level is applied to the casing, where the external force is in a particular direction from an outside of the casing toward an inside of the casing, as required by claim 1. Applicants are not conceding the relevance of the rejection to the remaining features of the rejected claims.

Claims 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Koike et al. in view of Moerman et al. (US 7,378,007). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claims 21 and 22 depend ultimately from claim 1 and are patentable over Koike et al. for at least the same reasons discussed above regarding claims 1 and 3-18. Moerman et al. do not remedy the deficiencies of Koike et al. In fact, Moerman et al. are completely silent as to a lancet body becoming movable relative to a casing when an external force exceeding a predetermined level is applied to the casing, where the

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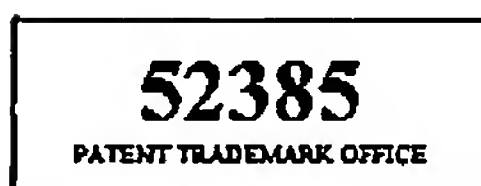
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external force exceeding a predetermined level is applied to the casing, where the external force is in a particular direction from an outside of the casing toward an inside of the casing as required by claim 1. Applicants are not conceding the relevance of the rejection to the remaining features of the rejected claims.

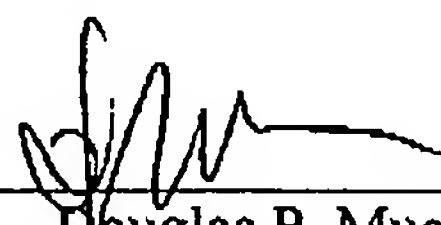
In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a notice of allowance is respectfully requested. Any questions regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, Douglas P. Mueller, Reg. No. 30,300, at (612) 455-3804.

Respectfully submitted,

HAMRE, SCHUMANN, MUELLER &
LARSON, P.C.
P.O. Box 2902-0902
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0902
(612) 455-3800



Dated: April 19, 2010

By: 
Douglas P. Mueller
Reg. No. 30,300

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